

Jules: The Bride

The Bride, Jules, had envisioned her wedding day as a meticulously planned celebration, the pinnacle of happiness. However, the moment unravels when she realizes her husband, Will, is missing. Moving through the lavishly decorated marquee, she scans the crowd, her heart tightening with each passing second. The once-adoring guests, who had been fixated on her and Will only hours before, are now lost in their own revelry, oblivious to her rising concern. The reception has shifted from an elegant affair to a chaotic celebration, where nostalgia and indulgence take center stage. Laughter, music, and clinking glasses fill the air, yet The Bride feels detached, as if she is merely an observer in a world where everyone else is carefree. When her cousin Beth casually mentions that Will was last seen helping Olivia—the one person who always seemed to invite trouble—Jules is hit with an immediate wave of unease.

The name Olivia stirs something deep within Jules, an instinctual dread she can't quite shake. Olivia had been acting strangely all evening, and though Jules had dismissed it as wedding-day stress, her absence with Will now feels calculated, deliberate. She steps outside the marquee, expecting to find them nearby, but instead, she is met with a group of smokers from their university days, caught up in laughter and casual conversation. Their indifference irritates her, their responses clipped and uninterested as if her concern is an overreaction. How could they not see that something was wrong? The feeling of isolation gnaws at her, tightening her chest as she realizes that, despite the grandeur of the occasion, she feels completely and utterly alone.

Determined to find her husband, Jules pushes forward, her heels sinking slightly into the damp grass as she moves away from the warmth and glow of the celebration. The fairy-tale moment she had imagined—her perfect wedding night—now feels distant, fading like an illusion she had foolishly believed in. Instead of basking in the romance of her newlywed evening, she is wandering through the dark, searching for a husband

who should be by her side. Each step feels heavier, her thoughts racing with possibilities she doesn't want to consider. What if Will had willingly left with Olivia? What if he wasn't missing but deliberately avoiding her? A sick feeling twists in her stomach as she realizes how little she truly knows about what he is capable of.

The night takes on an eerie stillness as she distances herself from the noisy reception, her surroundings dark and unfamiliar. The twinkling lights and floral arrangements feel like remnants of a dream that no longer belongs to her. She had spent months perfecting every detail of this wedding, ensuring every moment would be flawless, yet here she was, chasing after a husband who had vanished without a word. The irony stings, a cruel reminder that no amount of planning can control the unexpected. The guests continue to celebrate, oblivious to the fact that the bride is unraveling, her dream slipping further from her grasp with each passing moment. She clenches her fists, determined not to let the night collapse into disaster, but the truth is already settling in—something is very, very wrong.

Panic begins to set in as Jules retraces her steps, moving back toward the marquee with renewed urgency. She needs answers, but no one around her seems to care enough to provide them. Everyone is caught up in their own indulgences, their own escapes, treating the wedding as if it is just another extravagant party. The realization leaves her feeling hollow, her frustration turning into anger. She had crafted this night with precision, making sure every detail was perfect—so why did it feel like she was the only one who cared? The thought is suffocating, wrapping around her like a weight she can't shake.

As she stops for a moment, catching her breath, an unsettling thought creeps into her mind: What if she doesn't find Will? And, perhaps even worse, what if she does? The weight of that question lingers, heavier than anything else. She knows, deep down, that whatever she discovers will change everything, that the illusion of her perfect wedding is already cracking beyond repair. The night is no longer a celebration; it has become a mystery waiting to unfold, and Jules is terrified of what she will uncover.